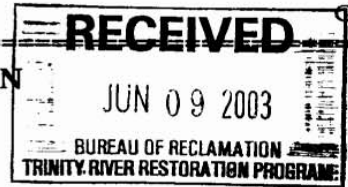


DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION

P.O. BOX 1296

WEAVERVILLE, CALIFORNIA 96093

(530) 623-4201 FAX (530) 623-5444



June 8, 2003

Rich Miller
Civil Engineer
US Bureau of Reclamation
PO Box 1300
Weaverville, CA 96093

Dear Rich,

You asked me to examine and comment upon the engineering diagrams for the Salt Flat bridge proposals. My observations are:

1. It appears that Alternatives 1, 2, and the Proposed Action all include adding additional road surface to the curve area at the western end of the bridge. As the current Salt Flat bridge as it exists is accessible to our CDF fire engines, the additional road surface areas would be helpful to allow fire equipment to "pull over" to let fleeing civilian vehicles by but not critical to fire engine access. The additional road surface, along with a wider bridge surface and increased weight carrying capacity provided by a new bridge, may allow us to cross a new bridge with a bulldozer transport vehicle (which requires approximately an 80,000 pound minimum capacity). The present bridge prevents us from even unloading a bulldozer from the transport on the eastern end of the span and walking the bulldozer across. This would obviously enhance our abilities to provide wildland fire protection to the Salt Flat subdivision.
2. There has been comment that your alternatives or Proposed Action do not address "Turnarounds". Under the Trinity County Fire Safe Ordinance 1162, which I administer for Trinity County, turnarounds are required for individual driveways that are in excess of 300 feet in length or at the terminus of a dead end road. The purpose of the turnaround is to allow a fire engine to approach a residence requiring protection from an encroaching wildfire and be able to quickly turn around and face outwards in the event the fire engine must rapidly evacuate due to safety concerns for the engine crew. The application of the term "turnaround" to a new bridge structure does not make sense from the standpoint of Ordinance 1162's requirement for turnarounds.
3. Ordinance 1162 requires any new bridge roadway structure to be constructed to carry at least the maximum load and provide the minimum vertical clearance as required by California Vehicle Code Sections 35550, 35750, and 35250. Appropriate signing, included but not limited to weight or vertical clearance limitations, one-way road or single lane conditions, shall reflect the capability of each bridge. A bridge with only one traffic lane may be authorized by the local jurisdiction; however, it shall provide for unobstructed visibility from one end to the other and

a.

b.

turnouts at both ends. I assume any of your alternatives will meet these requirements.

In summary, in my opinion, any of your actions or alternatives appear to provide much improvement in terms of emergency fire equipment access and the ability to provide fire protection for the Salt Flat subdivision. I am in favor of your proposal to replace the existing bridge with a modern enhanced bridge structure.

C.

Please contact me if I may be of further assistance.



Bill Britton
Battalion Chief

RESPONSE TO COMMENT: 18

State of California – The Resources Agency Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Bill Britton)

18-a: Thank you for your response. The information provided clarifies the intent of the Trinity County Fire Safe Ordinance No. 1162.

18-b: The bridges have been designed in accordance with CalTrans, AASHTO, FHWA and Trinity County guidelines and requirements. Biggers Road Bridge is currently designed as a one-lane private bridge incorporating a turnout at the left approach (Steel Bridge Road) and utilizing existing roadway intersection area as a turnout at the right approach (private property). The final design will incorporate adequate turnout area in accordance with CDF and Trinity County guidelines.

18-c: Thank you for your comment. Your comment has been noted, and will be transmitted to the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors, and federal officials for their consideration in connection with the merits of the proposed project. No further response is required.